

KEVIN CLINTON

Preliminary Initiation in the Eleusinian Mysteries

The terms used for the process of initiation in the Eleusinian Mysteries were the noun μύησις and the verb μυεῖν, derived from μύειν, «to close» and obviously related to the name of the festival, Μυστήρια. The initiate was called μύστης, because he was «closed», evidently with respect to his eyes, i.e. blindfolded.¹ The festival of the Μυστήρια, according to the old sense of the term, was the festival of the μύσται.² A related question involving terminology is whether there was a preliminary ceremony that initiates had to undergo in order to qualify to receive

Abbreviations:

I. Eleusis = K. Clinton, *Eleusis, The Inscriptions on Stone: Documents of the Sanctuary of the Two Goddesses and Public Documents of the Deme*, IA (Text) and IB (Plates), The Archaeological Society at Athens 2005.

idem, *Stages of Initiation* = K. Clinton, *Stages of Initiation in the Eleusinian and Samothracian Mysteries*, in M. B. Cosmopoulos (ed.), *Greek Mysteries: The Archaeology and Ritual of Ancient Greek Secret Cults*, London and New York 2003, 50-77.

The present article is an expanded version of the discussion of Μύησις in *I. Eleusis*, II, Introduction (in press). It was read as a paper at the Symposium in Honor of Michael Jameson: *Elegy, Sacrifice, Graves, Cults, and Epigraphy at the Synchrotron*, held at Cornell University on November 19, 2004. The range of topics at the symposium included just some of the wide-ranging interests of Michael Jameson.

1. For discussion see Clinton, *Stages of Initiation*, 50-51; *Myth and Cult: the Iconography of the Eleusinian Mysteries* (Skrifter utgivna av Svenska institutet i Athen, Series in 8°, 11), Stockholm 1992, 86. On blinded initiates in Dionysiac cult, see F. Matz, ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΑΚΗ ΤΕΛΕΤΗ, *Archäologische Untersuchungen zum Dionysoskult in hellenistischer und römischer Zeit*, Wiesbaden 1964, 1405, pl. 8; Dionysiac initiates completely veiled are illustrated by R. Turcan, *Liturgies de l'initiation bacchique à l'époque romaine (LIBER): Documentation littéraire, inscrite et figurée* (Mémoires de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres 27), Paris 2003, No. 4, Fig. 23; No. 13a, Fig. 41; No. 18, Fig. 52; or partially veiled, No. 23, Fig. 63 (cf. my review, *Gnomon*, forthcoming).

2. Clinton, *Stages of Initiation*, *loc. cit.*

this initiation, and if so, what was this preliminary ceremony called. The problem arises acutely in the context of the second most famous mystery cult in Greece, the Mysteries of the Great Gods of Samothrace, whose stages of initiation (μύησις and ἐποπτεία) and the terms for the initiates at these stages (μύσται and ἐπόπται) were apparently modeled on the Eleusinian Mysteries. The excavation there, conducted by the Institute of Fine Arts of New York University, uncovered a couple of stone markers, which must have stood at the boundaries of the sanctuary, and which bear inscriptions that announce, in Greek and Latin, a prohibition, «He who has not been initiated (ἄμύητος) may not enter.» One marker, found within the «Anaktoron», though not *in situ*, reads:³

3. P. M. Fraser, *Samothrace, Excavations Conducted by the Institute of Fine Arts of New York University*. 2.1, *The Inscriptions on Stone*, London 1960, 118-121, no. 63. The characteristics of the stone and the circumstances of its final resting place suggest that it was not originally erected within the building called «Anaktoron» as K. Lehmann-Hartleben, *Excavations in Samothrace*, *AJA* 43 (1939) 138, assumed. As the excavators noted in the diary on the day on which it was found (June 29, 1938), «... the lower part of the face, 55 cm. high, has a large central rough projection showing that the stone stood as far as that in the ground.» If such a prohibition were needed, as Prof. Lehmann supposed, to warn people against entering the northern room of the building, we would not expect it to be set 55 cm. into the ground *within a building*. Nor would we expect a massive stone such as this—96 cm. high, 51.5 cm. wide, 26 cm. thick—to be required within a building: a sign on a whitened board would have done the job. The excavators also observed in the diary: «The stone had fallen into the ground with the top part towards the west, thus originally it apparently faced the west side.» This observation does not agree with the position which Prof. Lehmann believed it originally had, namely between doors of the northern partition and facing south. Nor is it possible to reconcile this belief with the notion that the stone was standing with its lower part buried in the ground at the time that the building was destroyed by an earthquake, since it would then have to emerge some 55 cm. out of the ground in order to fall over on its side. The description of the excavation in the diary of this day also makes clear that the inscription belongs to the layer that included pottery of the Classical and early Hellenistic periods. What the excavators could not know in 1938 was that they had penetrated a layer that belonged to the fill of the previous building, the «Proto-Anaktoron», a building later excavated by Prof. McCredie and dated by him to the first half of the third century (*Hesperia* 48 [1979] 32-33). The inscription, therefore, mixed as it was with earlier material, belongs to a phase prior to the construction of the «Anaktoron», which McCredie's later excavation proved to date to the early Imperial period (*ibid.*, 33-34). The lettering of the inscription is impossible to date accurately, but a date in the first century B.C. is certainly possible (the lunar sigma tends to militate against an earlier date). Therefore the inscription was most likely buried in the floor of the «Anaktoron» during its construction. Its original location, i.e. before it was buried in the floor of the «Anaktoron», is unknown.

deorum • sacra
qui non accepe-
runt • non intrant.
ἀμύητον
μὴ εἰσιέναι.

The other, also not *in situ*, reads:⁴

ἀμύητον
μὴ εἰσιέναι
εἰς τὸ ἱερόν.

But in order to participate in the Mysteries, therefore to be initiated, one had to enter the sanctuary. What sense, then, does it make to say that one cannot enter the sanctuary if one is not already initiated? The whole purpose of entering the sanctuary was to become initiated. The solution, therefore, would seem to be that the term «uninitiated», ἀμύητος, meant that the candidate had not taken part in some rite that qualified him or her for initiation. We may call this rite «preliminary initiation.» Various pieces of evidence from the Mysteries at Eleusis help to clarify this preliminary step.

The earliest information is contained in a law of ca. 460 B.C., *I. Eleusis* 19 C.20-31, 43-46 (= *IG I³ 6*):

20 Ε[ὐ]μολπίδ]ας κα-
ὶ Κέρ[υκ]ας λαμβάν[εν παρὰ] τῷ μ-
ύστ[ο ἡ]εκάστῳ πέν[τε ὀβολὸς τ]-
ὄν [ἄρρ]ένον, θελειῶ[ν δὲ τρεῖς]-
[ἄτελῃ μ]ύστεμ μὲ ἐν[εῖναι μῦ]-
25 [ν μεδέ]να πλὲν τῷ ἀφ' [έστίας μ]-
[ομέν]ο· Κέρυκας δὲ μῦ[εν δίχα τ]-
[ὸς] μύστας ἡέκαστον [καὶ Εὐμο]-
[λ]π[ίδ]ας κατὰ ταῦτά· ἐ[ὰν δὲ κατ]-
[ὰ] πλείος εὐθύνεσθα[ι χιλίας]-
30 [ι] δρα[χ]μῆσι· μῦεν δὲ ἡ[οὶ ἂν ἡεβ]-
ῶσι Κερύκον καὶ Εὐ[μολπιδὸν]-

43 [τ]ὸς μύστας τὸς Ἐλε[υσῖνι μῦ]-
[μ]ένος ἐν τῇ αὐλῇ [ἐντὸς τῷ ἡ]-

4. Fraser, *op. cit.*, 117-118, no. 62. As Fraser notes, it was found «ca. 4.0 [m.] west of the pronaos of the 'Hierón.'»

- 45 [ι]ερῶ, τὸς δὲ ἐν ᾧσται [μυομένο]-
[ς] ἐν τῷ Ἑλευσινίῳ [νννν]⁵

Foucart and earlier scholars had suspected that lines 43-46 (at that time lines 20-31 and 42-46 were not well edited) implied a ritual called μύησις. Foucart suggested that μύησις included the early stage of the festival, and ended with a sacrifice, probably on Boedromion 16; it was succeeded by the τελετή, which took place at Eleusis.⁶ Mommsen took it to refer to the Lesser Mysteria, held in the month of Anthesterion, and the rituals held at the Greater Mysteria on Boedromion 16, 17, and 18.⁷ Pringsheim was the first to recognize that it had to be distinguished from the main festival of the Mysteria. At the time he wrote, lines 42-46 were available to him in the following form:

- [μ]ύστας ἑκαστο μ[...7...]
43 [τ]ὸς μύστας τὸς Ἑλε[υσί]νι μυο]-
[μέ]νος ἐν τῇ αὐλῇ [...τῷ ἡ]-
45 [ι]ερῶ, τὸς δὲ ἐν ᾧσται [μυομένο]-
[ς] ἐν τῷ Ἑλευσινίῳ [...6...]

From this passage he concluded:

«Leider ist die Stelle [lines 42-46] zerstört und hat noch keinen Ergänzer gefunden; aber soviel ist klar, dass es sich um irgend eine Leistung handelt, die jeder Myste schuldig war, und dass diese Mysten entweder im eleusinischen Heiligtum oder im städtischen Eleu-

5. On the defense of alternative restorations for both of these passages see R. M. Simms, *Myesis, Telete, and Mysteria*, *GRBS* 31 (1990) 184-187. However, πλείος in line 29, following upon the immediately preceding quite probable restoration, suggests an opposite condition should be restored in line 26, for which δίχρα is appropriate, the point being that μύησις must be limited to a single initiate at a time. Jameson's tentative proposals (*ad IG I³ 6*) for restoration (advocated more strongly by Simms), 1) τοσοῦ[το] or 2) καθ' ἑξ[ἑνα] or κατὰ δ[ύο] *vel sim.* have serious weaknesses. The first causes the sentence in lines 26-28 to be redundant, i.e. essentially a repetition of the sense of lines 20-26, without any apparent reason for such redundancy. The second requires us to take ἑκάστον as modifying Κέρυκας, which seems rather forced, following μύστας; in addition, this would imply that «each» member of the Kerykes and Eumolpidai performed *myesis*, a most unlikely obligation: «each» most naturally pertains to the Mystai, each of whom has to take part in a certain ritual.

6. P. Foucart, *Les grands mystères d'Éleusis*, *MemAcInscr* 37 (1904) 115.

7. A. Mommsen, *Feste der Stadt Athen*, Leipzig 1898, 215; cf. the comments of G. H. Pringsheim, *Archäologische Beiträge zur Geschichte des eleusinischen Kults*, Munich 1905, 38, n. 2.

sinion die Weihe empfangen haben konnten. Mit dieser Tatsache sind nicht allein die Aufstellungen, die eine ausschliesslich in Athen vollzogene Weihe voraussetzen – Foucart ausdrücklich, Mommsen implizite, da die kleine Mysterien und Epidaurien sich nicht in Eleusis abspielen – nicht in Einklang zu bringen; sondern es verträgt sich damit überhaupt die Anschauung nicht, dass die Myesis ein Bestandteil der Feste selbst gewesen sei.»⁸

The key to this solution was (1) the fact that the pilgrims could undergo this ritual either in the court of the sanctuary at Eleusis or in its satellite sanctuary, discovered below the Acropolis in the course of the Agora Excavations,⁹ and (2) the fact that the ritual was not performed by the regular priests of the Mysteries who performed the main initiation but by any male member of either of the Eumolpidae or Kerykes, the two priestly clans in charge of the Mysteries.

This separation of μῆσις from the central festival of the Greater Mysteries could be seen, according to Pringsheim, in Plutarch's description of the initiation of Demetrius Poliorcetes (*Dem.* 26): βούλεται παραγενόμενος εὐθύς μνηθῆναι καὶ τὴν τελετὴν ἅπασαν ἀπὸ τῶν μικρῶν ἄχρι τῶν ἐποπτικῶν παραλαβεῖν. Although μνηθῆναι in this passage makes perfect sense as an expression of preliminary initiation, the passage is open to an alternative interpretation, namely that μνηθῆναι refers to the entire process of initiation from the Lesser Mysteries to the ἐποπτικά.¹⁰

Pringsheim further noted the references in a financial account of the 330's, *I. Eleusis* 159 (= *IG II²* 1673), to μῆσις of public slaves working in the Eleusinian sanctuary: 1) *I. Eleusis* 159.24: [τ]ῶν δημοσίων ἐμύησαμεν πέντε ἄνδρας τοὺς ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ ἀνακαθαίροντας («we initiated five public slaves cleaning in the sanctuary»). Presumably they needed μῆσις in order to enter the sanctuary and do the cleaning. 2) *I. Eleusis* 159.44: μ<ι>σθωτοῖς τέττ[αρσ]ι τὰ σκεύη συ[ν]επ[ι]σκευά-

8. Pringsheim, *op. cit.*, 39-40.

9. On the City Eleusinion see now M. M. Miles, *The Athenian Agora XXXI, The City Eleusinion*, Princeton 1997.

10. Simms, *op. cit.*, 188-189, understands here «a weak hendiadys: εὐθύς gives the time, while τῶν ... παραλαβεῖν gives the degree or extent, of the myesis desired.» In my chapter, *Stages of Initiation*, 52, I noted: «The καὶ following μνηθῆναι may express apposition; i.e. following καὶ the entire process of μνηθῆναι may be specified: reception of the entire *telete*, from the Lesser Mysteries through the *epoptika*.» On this use of καὶ see J. D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles*, Oxford 1966, s.v. καὶ, I (5), 291.

σ[ασι] μετὰ μυστήρια, πρὶν ἔλθειν τοὺς δημοσίους Ἐλευσινόθεν (arrival of the public slaves «after the Mysteria»). Line 24 is, again, not inconsistent with the existence of a ceremony of preliminary initiation but is not conclusive, since the time of μύησις is not specified (in this account expenditures are not necessarily listed in chronological order). We need to know when this ceremony of μύησις took place: Was it the main initiation during the Greater Mysteria, or did it take place at an earlier time?

The publication of a new fragment eliminated this difficulty by helping to complete the entry in line 62: λιθαγω[γοῖς Π]εντελῆθεν : προθύματα δο[θέντα, εἰς μύ]ησιν οἷς : ΔΗ : εἰς ἱερά : ΗΗ : Δήμητρι οἷς ὕ ΔΗ : Κόρηι κριὸς : ΔΓΗ («to the stone transporters from Pentele, preliminary sacrifices given: for μύησις a ewe, Dr. 12; for the *hiera* (incidentals of sacrifice), Dr. 3; for Demeter a ewe, Dr. 12; for Kore a ram, Dr. 17).¹¹ Now the transport of stone from Mt. Pentelikon to the sanctuary at Eleusis started in the month of Metageitnion (*I. Eleusis* 159.64) and ended before the celebration of the Mysteria (lines 64-90). The hauling of heavy stone customarily was carried out during the driest time of the year, when the roads were in the best condition.¹² The first precise date given in this account is the tenth of Metageitnion (lines 72-73). Before that day, seven drums were transported in Metageitnion, thus the transport started very early in the month. After the next to the last day of Metageitnion (lines 80-81) six more drums were delivered. Therefore the last delivery took place very close to the beginning of the celebration of the Mysteria (Boedromion 15), since deliveries took place at two- or three-day intervals. When the festival was over (Boedromion 24), the operation probably was not resumed, for by then the first fall rains could soon be expected, rendering transport very difficult. The length of the account of the stone transport in this document suggests that this operation had indeed ceased by the time of the Mysteria.

The most natural interpretation of the entry in line 62 therefore is that the μύησις of the λιθαγω[γοῖς Π]εντελῆθεν took place before the start of the stone transport in Metageitnion, so that they could enter the sanctuary (or sensitive areas within the sanctuary). Since the transport operations ceased before the start of the Mysteria, there would be no reason for the administrators to pay the costs of the

11. K. Clinton, *AE* 1971, 83-113, no. 4, with my discussion of this passage in *Sacrifice at the Eleusinian Mysteries*, in *Early Greek Cult Practice*, ed. R. Hägg and N. Marinatos (*Skrifter utgivna av Svenska institutet i Athen, Series in 4^o, 38*), Stockholm, 1988, 69-79.

12. At Delphi and Epidaurus the time for transporting stone was also always the summer; cf. G. Glotz, *REG* 31 (1918) 218.

actual initiation of these transporters, and indeed no such expense (in the form of fees, as in *I. Eleusis* 19 C.5-26 [= *IG I³* 6] and *I. Eleusis* 52 III.23-25 [= *IG I³* 386]) is recorded, but only a sacrifice of a ewe for their μύησις, which allowed them to enter the sanctuary.¹³

Pringsheim also brought to bear an entry in a financial document of a few years later, 329/8, *I. Eleusis* 177.269 (= *IG II²* 1672): μῆσις δυοῖν τῶν δημοσίων : ΔΔΔ.¹⁴ Here too it is a matter of a sacrifice of a ewe.¹⁵ This expense is listed in the sixth prytany of 329/8, which ended on approximately 7 Anthesterion, i.e. approximately two weeks before the Lesser Mysteries took place. The inevitable conclusion is that this μῆσις took place at least two weeks before the Lesser Mysteries; therefore, the μῆσις could not have been the main initiation at the Lesser Mysteries.¹⁶

Sacrifice at these instances of μύησις is especially interesting because sacrifice is a plausible restoration in *I. Eleusis* 19 C.40:

40 θύεν δ]-
[ἐ] τὸς ὀρφανὸς παῖ[δας καὶ τὸς]
[μ]ύστας *ἡέκαστομ* π[ροθύματα,]
[τ]ὸς μύστας τὸς Ἑλε[υσῖνι μυο]-
[μ]ένος ἐν τῇ αὐλῇ [ἐντὸς τῷ *ἡ*]-
45 [ι]ερῷ, τὸς δὲ ἐν ἄστει [μυομένο]-
[ς] ἐν τῷ Ἑλευσινίοι [*υυυυυ*]

It is precisely a πρόθυμα that is required at the μύσις of the stone transporters (*I. Eleusis* 159.62) and presumably also at the μύσις of the public slaves in 329/8 (*I. Eleusis* 177.269).¹⁷

13. Simms, *op. cit.*, 188, takes the expense of μύησις in line 62 to be «ancillary costs of the slaves' μύησις in line 24.» This is not possible. The slaves in line 24 are described as «cleaning in the sanctuary»; the workers in line 62 are λιθογῳ[γοὶ Π]εντελῆθεν.

14. Pringsheim, *op. cit.*, 40-41.

15. For discussion see Clinton, Sacrifice, *op. cit.* (above, n. 11), 69-70: a ewe cost Dr. 30 according to this account.

16. Simms, *loc. cit.*, noting that a sacrificial victim and two measures of wine were purchased in this prytany for the benefit of the public slaves at the Choes (lines 266-267), infers that «the same may well have been true of expense for μύησις, which can then be associated with the Mysteria later in Anthesterion.» However, only four days separated the end of the sixth prytany from the Choes (12 Anthesterion), whereas the Lesser Mysteria were approximately two weeks away; for the Lesser Mysteria such an advance purchase of victims would be unnecessary (victims were presumably paid for on delivery); no other outlay in the sixth prytany can be certainly associated with the Lesser Mysteria.

17. In this period a single sacrifice is allowed for each *group* of initiands.

Pringsheim's conclusions about μύησις as preliminary initiation were followed by other scholars, most notably, by P. Roussel, who recognized that the member of the Eumolpidae or Kerykes who performed the μύησις was the candidate's μυσταγωγός.¹⁸ The complete publication of *I. Eleusis* 138 in 1980, a law issued in the 360's, confirmed that μύησις was carried out by a member of the Eumolpidae or Kerykes (line A.21): ἐὰν δέ τις μυῖ[ι Ε]ὐμολ[πιδῶν ἢ Κηρύκων οὐκ ὦν εἰδῶς, ἢ ἐὰν προσάγῃ τις μυησόμε[νον]. The passage implies that μύησις was a ritual carried out by any legitimate member of these two clans, and therefore cannot be identical to the celebration proper, which was performed by a small number of priests.¹⁹ An example of μύησις seems to be provided by Andocides, a member of the Kerykes, who says of himself (Andoc. 132): ... διὰ τί ποτε τοῖς ἐμοὶ νυνὶ ἐπιτιθεμένοις μετὰ Καλλίου καὶ συμπαρασκευάσασσι τὸν ἄγωνα καὶ χρήματα εἰσενεγκοῦσιν ἐπ' ἐμοὶ τρία μὲν ἔτη ἐπιδημῶν καὶ ἥκων ἐκ Κύπρου οὐκ ἄσεβεῖν ἐδόκουν αὐτοῖς, μυῶν μὲν Α〈...〉 Δελφόν, ἔτι δὲ καὶ ἄλλους ξένους ἐμαυτοῦ, καὶ εἰσιῶν εἰς τὸ Ἐλευσίνιον καὶ θύων, ὥσπερ ἐμαυτὸν ἄξιον νομίζω εἶναι; Here Andocides offers as proof of his piety that he «initiated» (μυῶν) some of his foreign guest-friends, and that he entered the Eleusinion and sacrificed. Although μυεῖν is occasionally attested with the sense «to have (someone) initiated» and may imply no more than payment of expenses (Dem. 29.21), it cannot have that limited sense here. As D. MacDowell pointed out in his commentary, «... And(ocides) must have done something else besides pay a bill, for in 132 he is listing actions to which objection might have been made on religious grounds; he must have taken some part in the ceremony of initiation.»²⁰ Clearly he did not perform a ceremony as a priest, but as a member of the Kerykes; and if he did not perform it as a priest, the

18. P. Roussel, L'initiation préalable et le symbole éleusinien, *BCH* 54, 1930, 51-57. See also M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*, I², Munich 1961, 656, and A. D. Nock, Hellenistic Mysteries and Christian Sacraments, *Mnemosyne* 5 (1952) 179. That only members of the Eumolpidae and Kerykes could serve as mystagogoi was recognized by Foucart, *op. cit.* (above, n. 6), 93-95, and *Les Mystères d'Éleusis*, Paris 1914, 281-284.

19. Simms, *op. cit.*, 190-193, interprets μύησις by members of the Eumolpidae and Kerykes here and in *I. Eleusis* 19 C.26-31 as equivalent to μυσταγωγία. However, μυσταγωγία extended through most of the festival, including the secret part in Eleusis. Μύησις, as the passages in *I. Eleusis* 159 and 176, discussed above, reveal, took place before the festival proper. There was indeed a close, apparently inseparable, connection between μύησις and μυσταγωγία, but they were not coterminous.

20. Andokides, *On the Mysteries*, Oxford 1962, 156, following A. D. J. Makkink, *Andokides' Eerste Rede*, Amsterdam 1932, 10.

ceremony that he performed must have been the preliminary μύησις (with the attendant task of serving as the initiate's μυσταγωγός at the Mysteries).

Μύησις is mentioned again in a fragmentary decree of the second or first century B.C., *I. Eleusis* 250.27: πρὸ τοῦ τῆς] μυσήσεως καιρ[ο]ῦ ἐξ[ηγῶντα]! τ[ο]ῖς μύστ[αις - - -]. The passage implies that there was a period of time set aside for the μύησις, presumably a few weeks before the beginning of the Greater and Lesser Mysteries respectively. Μύησις cannot be taken here to mean «the Mysteries», since πρὸ τοῦ τῆς] μυσήσεως καιρ[ο]ῦ would be an odd way of expressing «before the Mysteries» instead of the correct and easy πρὸ μυστηρίων (so in line 12; cf. line 35, μετὰ τὰ μ[υστήρι]α). Μύησις here must refer to a preliminary ritual and not the main celebration of the Mysteries.²¹

The term μύησις occurs again in a dedication to Asclepius around the end of the first century A.D., *IG II²* 3195:

[Δημ]ήτριος Χάρητος Γαργήτιος

[----- 15 -----] καὶ τὴν ὑποδοχὴν καὶ τὴν μύησιν οἰκείοις ἀναλώμασι [- -]
[τ]ῷ θεῷ νυ καὶ τῇ πατρίδι.

Demetrios son of Chares of Gargettos, an official of the cult of Asclepius, financed the reception and the μύησις of the god, which were most likely represented in paint on this stele.²² The combination of these two ceremonies suggests proximity, in this case temporal proximity – the Reception and shortly afterwards the Μύησις. Now according to Philostr. *VA* 4.17, this occurred on 17 Boedromion, the day called Epidauria «on account of Asclepius, because they initiated him as he arrived from Epidaurus late for the Mysteries» (Ἀσκληπιοῦ ἔνεκα, ὅτι δὴ ἐμύησαν αὐτὸν ἦκοντα Ἐπιδαυρόθεν ὁπὲ τῶν μυστηρίων). This μύησις on 17 Boedromion of course is not the initiation proper at Eleusis, which occurred on Boedromion 21, but must be a late μύησις, which was performed within the Eleusinion shortly after the Reception (which commemorates the original Reception of Asclepius upon his arrival on 17 Boedromion 420 B.C.).²³

Confusion is caused by the fact that the verb μυεῖν can refer to the initiation proper at Eleusis, as Pringsheim noted already in 1905.²⁴ In the Roman period

21. Cf. Clinton, *The Epidauria and the Arrival of Asclepius in Athens*, in *Ancient Greek Cult Practice from the Epigraphical Evidence*, ed. R. Hägg (Skrifter utgivna av Svenska institutet i Athen, Series in 8°, 11), Stockholm 1995, 17-34, esp. 26 and note 29.

22. See my discussion, *ibid.*, 25-26.

23. Clinton, *ibid.* Demetrios' dedication states that he paid the expense of the μύησις; it does not imply that he performed the μύησις.

24. *Op. cit.* (above, n. 7), 46. Cf. Clinton, *The Sacred Officials of the Eleusinian Mys-*

priests and priestesses used the same verb to refer to their own initiatory activity at the Mysteria.²⁵ Precisely which sense of the verb is intended in a given instance must depend upon the context, that is, whether it is the old technical sense of *μυεῖν*, «perform the *μύησις*» (which entails serving as *μυσταγωγός*), or the ritual at the main celebration of the Mysteria.²⁶

Μύησις undoubtedly determined eligibility for participation in the Mysteria. It surely entailed purification and some instruction.²⁷ The shape of the ritual performed at this moment may be inferred from the basic meaning of *μύησις*, i.e. «closing», presumably closing of the eyes, as was discussed above. If this is correct, the *μύησις* will have provided a foretaste of the experience of the initiate at the Mysteria, in being blinded, by having a hood or veil placed over his or her head. The initiate might have looked rather like the hooded initiate in such representations of the Roman period as the Lovatelli Urn and the Torre Nova sarcophagus, even though these representations do not directly reflect Eleusinian ritual.²⁸ Undergoing this rite qualified the pilgrim to be a *μύστης* and take part in the Mysteria. If one did not undergo this rite, then one was *ἀμύητος*, prohibited from entering the sanctuary. No prohibition inscription has been preserved from the sanctuary at Eleusis, but those that once existed probably read very much like those at Samothrace, whose Mysteria closely followed the ritual terminology of Eleusis: *ἀμύητον μὴ εἰσιέναι εἰς τὸ ἱερόν*.

teries (TAPS, 64.3), Philadelphia 1974, 13, note 15; Stages of Initiation, 52-53; Simms, *op. cit.*, 189-190.

25. Clinton, *The Eleusinian Mysteries: Roman Initiates and Benefactors*, Second Century B.C. to A.D. 207, *ANRW* 18.2, Berlin 1989, 1502, note 9; *I. Eleusis* 454, 503.

26. Simms, *op. cit.*, 191-195, wishes to limit this technical sense of *μυεῖν* and *μύησις* to the *μυσταγωγία*, but the examples adduced above clearly show that a separate ritual was also involved. The phrase in *I. Eleusis* 250.27, *πρὸ τοῦ τῆς μύησεως καὶ [οἱ] μύηται*, is especially difficult for this hypothesis, for if *μύησις* is *μυσταγωγία*, this phrase, «before the *μυσταγωγία*», would be a strange, roundabout expression for «before the Mysteria» (see above, p. 21). Simms argues that «*μυσταγωγός* and its cognates are relatively late words», but Menander, frag. 714 K. tells against this; furthermore, Menander's metaphorical use of *μυσταγωγός* (*δαίμων ... μυσταγωγός τοῦ βίου ἀγαθός*) tends to suggest that the word was not a very recent creation. It is conceivable, however, that in the Classical period it was not an official term, but more likely that we do not see it in preserved documents because the term *μύησις* was all that was necessary, in denoting both the preliminary ritual and the attendant *μυσταγωγία*.

27. Cf. Roussel, *op. cit.*; Clinton, *Stages of Initiation*.

28. Roussel, *op. cit.*; Clinton, *Stages of Initiation*, 59-60.